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595 Angneló, the sister of Kangndádn. Kangndádn had married Thunder Storm's sister and the two men had become almost inseparable. Though they are dead their relationship is perpetuated today in the relationship of their sons. But it was only after Kangndádn had married Thunder Storm's sister that Thunder Storm married Angneló. It is not at all rare among the Kaingáng that when a man marries another man's sister, her brother [592] marries her husband's sister. The constant companionship of the two men, thrown together by the first marriage, brings this about in an informal way. Chukembégn, who deserted his wife Tendó and three children, was "led away" from her by his brother-in-law's sister, a young woman whom he saw day after day in his sister's house.

595 578 There is still another way in which polygyny may come about and that is if a wife calls another woman to "work with her." The husband, ostensibly, has no hand in the matter at all. The woman who does this gains a helper and companion, one who will nurse her children when she is away, who will accompany her on fruit-gathering expeditions, who will relieve her of the heavy loads of meat she has to transport and who will care for her when she is ill. At the same time, however, she assumes in herself an ability to share which experience may prove to be non-existent. But the Kaingáng tell me, the first wife may become so jealous of the second that her continual anger at last drives the second wife out, even after she has borne as many as two children. First wives never leave in such a situation. Thus it comes about that a second wife in a polygynous marriage shifts about a good deal. If she is heckled by the first wife she begins to look more seriously on her lovers, and when she slips out of one marriage she slips as easily into another.

Polygyny is not always an entirely pleasant experience for a man, for although it is good to have a second wife during the several months after [853] childbirth when intercourse with the mother is stopped, and two wives lighten each other's and their husband's burdens and bring in more food, a man must put up with their quarreling between themselves and the insults of either one who feels herself slighted.

581 556 Every marriage system is organized around some system of ideas no matter how unformulated they may be. Our own culture continually balances the ideal of love against the desire for property. The ideas that serve as the basis for the contraction of marriage carry within them the criteria by which all individuals are judged. We value people insofar as they are lovable or rich and powerful. Our ideas of what we consider a desirable sex companion are pretty clearly formulated and furnish the subject of many a conversation. But the Kaingáng are not educated to an ideal of love, and they have not formulated success in life in terms of wealth or prestige. Even raiding the Brazilians has given them little property, and

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the little they have they do not keep for themselves, but distribute among 581
their relatives. My greatest trouble with them was that they could never 556
understand "what you want with all that stuff" that I kept for trading, nor
with the wood I accumulated against the rainy season. And they have
carried the same attitudes into their marital relations.

Several wives are not a mark of prestige but the result of special events. 595
Love as the nucleus of sexual relations implies loyalty in our culture, for 581
loyalty is an essential part of love. Even where marriage lacks the essence 181
but preserves the ideal it may still have a certain amount of loyalty left in
it if other factors such as security and power make loyalty expedient, and
early education has conditioned spouses to be loyal when they do not love.
But the Kaingáng have never been educated to sexual loyalty, their *ethos* is
not built on the twin columns of wealth and power, and no one starves
among them as long as there is an ungnawed piece of tapir hide or a pine
nut in camp. So in their informal, almost casual marriages they are not
loyal to one another in the special sexual way in which we think of mar-
riage loyalty—as an exclusive sex interest in one person. And because they
are not fixated in their sexual interests and because there are no social
forms and few economic considerations to stabilize marriage, it is extremely
brittle until several children are born. Even then the stability that marriage
achieves does not fix sexual interest.

The Kaingáng are a people with no sense of social form. As an artist 181
with a fine feeling for form will communicate that sensitivity, that sense 595
and realization of an "inner harmony," as one artist put it to me, to every-
thing he does, a people with a feeling for or an interest in social form will
do most of the things that are important to them in a highly stylized way.[18]
If they are particularly interested in following lines of kinship or some
other rules of organization almost everything will be done in accordance
with their feelings of fitness as determined by these rules, and not a hunt-
ing party or a husking bee will be undertaken without its having been
planned along the lines of this organization. If their interest runs to danc-
ing and ceremonious display instead, they will manage to bring in dancing
and ceremony on every occasion. But the Kaingáng have no interest in
social forms of any kind. They have no pattern that will exclude one kind
of relationship while permitting another. So their sexual relations show the
same formlessness, excluding only parents and blood siblings and admitting
every kind of marriage known to anthropology. The Kaingáng are not
only monogamous and polygynous; but they were polyandrous too and
they also established what I shall call "joint marriages" in which several
men lived together with several women in mutual cohabitation. These last
two types will be discussed in the following chapter.

[18] This refers, of course, to societies which are more highly personalized.

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although he was willing to help Chukembégn, he felt quite differently about helping Chukembégn's brother, Kapíli. Kapíli had for a long time felt himself deserted by his wife's brother Waipó, and news of his anger had somehow reached Yuvén. But Waipó was Yuvén's co-husband, and Yuvén was angry, particularly because Waipó had died. "Yuvén came with many jacutingas. Wainlúin [his wife, the sister of Chukembégn and Kapíli] gave some to her brother Kapíli, but Yuvén ignored him. Kanyahé [Waipó's brother] did not speak to Kapíli." The situation between Kapíli and Waipó could be interpreted either as desertion on the part of Waipó or as desertion on the part of Kapíli. The close relatives of Waipó interpreted it, of course, in the latter way. This is the constant condition within the extended families: the streams of resentment are manifold, and the drying up of one does not mean the establishment of accord.

Property

In Kaingáng society there was only one reason for a man's accumulating property—in order to give it away to his affinal relatives when his little boy's lower lip was pierced for the insertion of the lip plug or when his little girl's thigh was pricked to make her "able to walk." In preparation for this festa of "blackening the children"[7] a number of men raided the Brazilians, stole their property, and came back and made beer for their affinal relatives. The people particularly singled out for recognition on this occasion were the child's *kôkla* and *mbẽ*, the male and female affinal relatives who buried the child's umbilical cord in the water and who on this day pierced its lip or thigh and symbolically "made" the child, thereby completing the process through which they become the child's ceremonial father and mother.[8] This was the child's ceremonial induction into the long series of activities through which in later life his bond with his father's relatives by marriage was maintained, with the vicissitudes to which all relationships were subjected in Kaingáng society. But it is not only the *kôkla*, the ceremonial father, and the *mbẽ*, the ceremonial mother, who received gifts on this day, but also other affinal relatives of the father, no matter whether he had come by them through his wife or through his sisters or cousins.

Accumulation of property is incomprehensible to the Kaingáng. Property is for use in the struggle for existence. It is not a means to prestige or power. Like most of the abstract values that our civilization has exploited, the concept of power over people is little developed among the Kaingáng. What property they gather above the immediate needs of existence is distributed throughout life to their close relatives. In days long ago, before the

[7] So called from the practice of smearing the children with charcoal. See Appendix III.
[8] See Appendix III.

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in which the emphasis on obligations to relatives by marriage is followed through. Formerly if the dead man left any little children who had not yet had their lips pierced or their thighs pricked, a close relative, usually a brother, gathered the dead man's possessions together, prepared beer for the child's "blackening," and distributed the goods to the in-laws of the dead man. Perhaps the surviving relative also had children to blacken, and so on such an occasion his own property would also be distributed to his own in-laws.

Once property had been stolen from the Brazilians it flowed by gradual stages from the hands of the warrior into those of his relatives, and on his death it was either distributed to his in-laws or inherited by his wife and children. Societies like those of the Plains Indians of North America had made the distribution of property a device for the attainment of prestige, but when a Kaingáng gave away his booty he was doing simply what was expected of him as a relative. In many societies power tends to concentrate where property accumulates, but although the Kaingáng respect power they cannot tolerate any kind of intensification of it; for such intensification is felt by them to be disruptive. Through their insistence on the primary importance of the other person and their failure to reward achievement, the Kaingáng have suppressed processes that encourage the concentration of power in the hands of outstanding individuals.

The Meaning of the Feuds

One of the sources of aggression was the accumulation of resentments growing out of adultery and rejections by "deserting" relatives. Feuds and raids on the Brazilians provided substitute outlets for these resentments, and at the same time, by projecting the aggressions outside, operated to protect each extended family from internal disruption. A factor powerful in the perpetuation of the feuds is the Kaingáng feeling that once a force has been started it can never be stayed. Paralleling this on the human side is the belief that once a person has committed murder he will keep on.[34] With such a view of the natural world all that is necessary is that murder be committed once in order that there shall be perpetual distrust of the murderer. Given this attitude, the distinction in emotional ties within and between the extended families, and the peculiar social outlook of the Kaingáng, it is easy to see why things should have taken the turn they did: since murderousness is the attribute not only of individuals but also of groups, the groups suspect—and slay—one another forever.

[34] A parallel to this is not hard to find in our own society, for we believe that "a leopard cannot change its spots," and "once a criminal always a criminal." One of the fundamental bases of the theory of capital punishment is that a murderer must be got out of the way because he is likely to commit another murder under similar circumstances.